

La Cenerentola

Music by Gioachino Rossini
 Libretto by Jacopo Ferretti

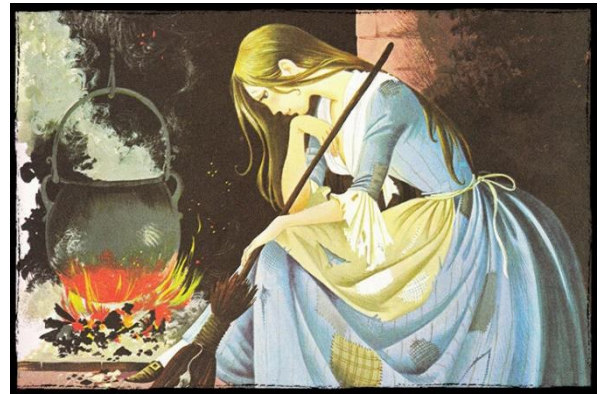
A Royal Feast

Words and Music by Michael Ching
 2020 World Premiere

Based on the fairy tale *Cendrillon* (Cinderella) by Charles Perrault

Tale as Old as Time...

The story of Cinderella is far older than one might think. While children today will recognize the story as a popular Disney movie, many others associate it with the famed Grimm Brothers, but it dates further back than that! This mythical folk tale of familial oppression and the moral triumph that follows can be traced back to the Greek geographer, Strabo sometime between 7 BC and 23 AD. Variations on the same story made their way throughout countries in Asia circa 900. The story with which we are most familiar was written by the French author, Charles Perrault, in 1697. His fantastical additions of the magical pumpkin, fairy godmother, and slippers gave the story mass appeal. These additions and lessons in morality lend itself perfectly to the several operatic adaptations that exist today!



La Cenerentola, ossia La bontà in trionfo Cinderella, or Goodness Triumphant

A dramma giocoso in 2 Acts

This “drama with jokes” style of opera is heavily associated with Rossini



First performed at the Teatro Valle in Rome, Italy
 January 25, 1817

The opera's libretto, or the text of a large musical work, is based on Perrault's story, which went by the name *Cinderella*, or *The Little Glass Slipper*. Ferretti and Rossini challenged each other to write the words and music, respectively, and did so in a matter of weeks. The opera was finished by both men in **24 days** – Rossini was only 25 at the time! The opera would go on to be one of Rossini's most popular, even eclipsing *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (*The Barber of Seville*).

FUN FACT! Cinderella's name is derived from the cinders thrown from a fireplace. In order to keep warm, she would curl up to a fireplace and shortly thereafter be covered in burnt coal and wood.



The Creators

Gioachino Rossini (1792-1868) was the world's foremost opera composer in his day. Over the course of just two decades, he created more than 30 stage works, both comic and tragic, before retiring from opera composition in 1829, at the age of 37, after his success with the grand *Guillaume Tell* (best known today for its overture). He's most remembered as a composer in the *bel canto* (beautiful singing) style along with Vincenzo Bellini and Gaetano Donizetti.



Jacopo Ferretti (1784-1852) was a substantive writer of poetry and opera libretti throughout Europe. While *La Cenerentola* is his only major success he wrote about 70 libretti – two for Rossini and five for Donizetti.

The Characters

This opera has many characters that correlate with the original story, and some new or different ones. *See if you can spot the changes Rossini and Ferretti made!*



Angelina (Cenerentola/Cinderella) – mezzo-soprano
Don Ramiro (Prince) – tenor
Dandini (Prince's personal servant) – baritone
Don Magnifico (Cenerentola's stepfather) – bass
Alidoro (philosopher and Prince's former tutor) – bass
Clorinda (stepsister) – soprano
Tisbe (stepsister) – mezzo-soprano

Chorus of Prince Ramiro's advisors and friends

Summary of the Opera

Angelina (La Cenerentola) is mistreated by her two sisters, Clorinda and Tisbe, and their father, Don Magnifico. Alidoro, Prince Ramiro's advisor, arrives at the house, disguised as a beggar. Some courtiers arrive to announce that Prince Ramiro will soon be visiting, looking for the most beautiful girl in the land to invite her to his ball. Angelina, of course, is not allowed to go to the ball. When Prince Ramiro arrives, dressed as his valet, Dandini, to observe the potential guests in disguise, he falls in love with Angelina as soon as he lays eyes on her. For his plan to work, Dandini, the Prince's valet, poses as his master, promising all sorts of things to Don Magnifico. Clorinda and Tisbe contrast with Angelina, who is the epitome of human kindness. Since her father has forbidden her to go to the ball, Alidoro promises to take her. At the ball, Clorinda and Tisbe are struck by the resemblance of a mysterious unknown woman with their sister, who they do not recognize in her beautiful outfit. Prince Ramiro is immediately smitten with her. When he asks for her hand, Angelina replies he must first discover who she is, and gives him one of a pair of matching bracelets so that he can find her.

Back at the ball, Dandini confesses to Don Magnifico that he is only the Prince's valet. Don Magnifico becomes highly indignant, and yells at him.

Angelina is back at the house, tending the fire, back to lamenting her life. Suddenly there is a thunderstorm. Ramiro and Dandini enter the house – but they are no longer disguised as each other. Prince Ramiro is surprised when he observes Angelina is wearing the matching bracelet! Everyone is shocked by this unexpected turn of events. All's well that ends well. In Prince Ramiro's castle, Cenerentola rejoices at finding true love and happiness. She forgives her sisters, who embrace her and celebrate the triumph of goodness.

FUN FACT! Many of the leads in Rossini's operas are sung by mezzo-sopranos. The warmth and agility apparent in these voices lend themselves well to the dynamic nature of Rossini's music and characterization.

The Anatomy of an Opera

Opera can be different than other kinds of shows you've seen before – either on television or live. What's important to remember about opera is that the music drives the story. The orchestra and voice combined can create magic! The following terms can help understand how we make that magic:

Aria – A song for a single character and orchestra.

Chorus – A group of people collectively commenting on the action taking place onstage.

Overture – A purely orchestral piece at the beginning of an opera, which will often musically introduce the audience to the story.

Recitative – Pitches and rhythms ordered in such a way that allows the singer to adopt a more speechlike pattern.

Score – Music that has been notated in a specific order of pitches and rhythms – like a blueprint for musicians.

Goodness Transformed

Rossini's opera deviates from the popular story in four key ways.

We will use Perrault's original story for reference.

Perrault

Rossini

Cinderella lives with her stepmother .	Cinderella lives with her stepfather .
Cinderella is visited by her fairy godmother .	Cinderella is visited by an old philosopher and tutor of the Prince named, Alidoro .
Filled with magical and fantastical elements.	Magical elements removed for the sake of live theatre at that time.
The Prince recognizes Cinderella by the correct size of the slipper .	The Prince recognizes Cinderella by their matching bracelets .

“A dream that you wish will come true...”

There are many different adaptations of the Cinderella story, including other operas, movies, and literature. List additional versions you can find below:



SVF launches its inaugural “Virtually Live” season which will take place daily at **5:30 and 6:00pm EST** from **May 4-10**, offering live mini-concerts, lectures and informative events through live-streaming.

A link will be provided on our homepage each to go on Facebook Live each day. No Facebook account is necessary for you to enjoy!

Relax in the comfort of your own home in your pajamas, if you want!

See the full schedule, including sessions on *La Cenerentola* and *A Royal Feast* here:

<https://savannahvoicefestival.org/virtually-live-series-schedule/>

This leads us to the debut of our sequel to *La Cenerentola*...



A Royal Feast

2020 World Premiere – Sponsored by **Jane Gilchrist**

In collaboration with
Savannah-Chatham County Public School System (SCCPSS)
The plot and storyline were devised by SCCPSS students with the composer!

Composer and Librettist: **Michael Ching (SVF Composer-In-Residence)**

Michael Ching is a composer, songwriter, conductor, and former arts administrator. His recent opera, *Speed Dating Tonight!* was commissioned and premiered by the Janiec Opera Company of the Brevard Music Center. Since its premiere in July 2013, *Speed Dating*

Tonight! has been produced fifteen times, including professional productions at Tri-Cities Opera, Amarillo Opera, and Microscopic Opera (Pittsburgh), and universities such as UT-Austin, the University of Memphis, Ithaca College, and the University of Central Florida. His 1996 opera *Buoso's Ghost* is a sequel to *Gianni Schicchi*. Ching has composed several operas for the Savannah VOICE Festival including, *Alice Ryley*, *Anna Hunter*, and *Birthday Clown*.



Setting the Stage

This sequel takes place in and outside an old abandoned warehouse near the Prince's palace on the night of the royal wedding. All the same characters are represented in this NEW opera.

Summary of the Opera

The critters of the palace are having a party to celebrate the wedding. They practice a song that they plan to sing for Angelina. It's in a dingy part of town near the docks so as not to attract too much attention from humanity. Angelina and Ramiro aren't there. They wonder when/if they'll show up...they've been invited. Three mice assure everyone that they'll show up--they were the ones that tipped off Alidoro about Angelina and we flashback to the time in Alidoro's library that that happened.

Back to the present...lead by Alidoro, Angelina, Ramiro, Clorinda, Tisbe, and Magnifico are being quickly and quietly led through the city. The family complains about it. They arrive at the party, and they see a room full of critters singing at them incomprehensibly.

Ramiro draws his sword, Magnifico runs off in a fright. Alidoro stops the confrontation and asks two spiders to come forward. They are chimney spiders and their venom bestows the gift of the mysterious ability to understand creature's speech. He asks Ramiro to take a sip of the venom. Angelina introduces Ramiro to other creatures as she has understood them for years.

Magnifico is arriving with soldiers or knights to rescue the group and torch the building with the critters in it.

Ramiro stops them and Angelina tells everyone that they must learn to live and let live in harmony.

Finally, Dandini shows up and his speech has become florid singing. Laughing, Alidoro tells him he's caught "Melisma" from singing in the Rossini in the first act. Demonstrating, they sing similarly to revel in the music and harmony.

AGAINST ALL ODDS!

Most of students' contributions to the show was written via Zoom conferences with the composer, teachers, and children as a response to the ravages of COVID-19.

Some of the best stories of all time have emerged as sequels. What are some other sequels, particularly musical, that you like? List below...



Listen to the Story



Here are some musical moments to pay attention to as you listen to both *La Cenerentola* and *A Royal Feast*.

1. **La Cenerentola Overture** – Rossini was famous for his overtures! Particularly how he added instruments one by one for a *crescendo* effect.
2. **The beautiful melodies in both operas** – Rossini was a *bel canto* composer, meaning his vocal lines naturally displayed the beauty of the voice. Ching continued this tradition in his own *legato* writing!
3. **How are the characters represented in the music they sing?**

MAKE YOUR OWN MAGICAL OPERA

Cinderella is one of the most famous stories of all time.

All operas originate from some form of a story, so now you can make your own!

Which story (new or old) would you write an opera about?

Who would be some of the main characters?

What would be the title of the main character's big aria (the solo in an opera)?

Write some of the lyrics below:

Now sing it, act it, and seek out other stories that make great operas!

CINDERELLA WORD FIND

A O R C T B S O B E A Y U S S
K I U R I E Q E E S M P Z T E
K H R L E N L C T Q S C A E Q
G U V A P C D Q M K I B O P U
U J P X A G B E T H L U K S E
C G E N C B I C R I E P J I L
J S T R A R E P O E M Z T S P
V O L O U D T I I C L F V T O
H J J Z C T N A F U G L Z E D
P V V H L I R P H D O K A R U
F R I U S K U E C H O R U S L
S N I S J A L T V F Z P P E U
G G O N O S H T G O E J I Q D
L R I C C O T T E R B I L Q M
U A X X I E K D Z V Y W L A Y



ARIA
BELCANTO
CHING
CHORUS
CINDERELLA
LIBRETTO
MELISMA
OPERA
OVERTURE
PRINCE
ROSSINI
SEQUEL
STEPSISTER